3 Contextual Framework

3.1 Contexts for civic and citizenship education

A study of civic-related learning outcomes and civic engagement needs to take the context in which civic and citizenship education occurs into account. Young people develop their understandings about their roles as citizens in contemporary societies through activities and experiences that take place within homes, schools, classrooms, and the wider community. It is therefore important to recognize that young people's cognitive and affective-behavioral learning outcomes are potentially influenced by variables that can be located at different levels in a multi-level structure (see Travers, Garden, & Rosier, 1989; Travers, & Westbury, 1989; Scheerens, 1990; Scheerens, & Bosker, 1997).

The individual student is located within overlapping contexts of school and home. Both contexts form part of the local community that, in turn, is embedded in the wider sub-national, national, and international contexts. The contextual framework for ICCS distinguishes the following levels:

- *Context of the wider community:* This level comprises the wider context within which schools and home environments work. Factors can be found at local, regional, and national levels. For some countries, the supra-national level might also be relevant as, for example, in member countries of the European Union. Given the increased importance of new social media, virtual communities connected through the internet also form part of this context.
- *Context of schools and classrooms:* This level comprises factors related to the instruction students receive, the school culture, and the general school environment.[10]
- *Context of home and peer environments:* This level comprises factors related to the home background and the immediate social out-of-school environment of the student (for example, peer-group activities).
- *Context of the individual:* This level refers to the individual characteristics of the student.

Another important distinction can be made by grouping contextual variables into antecedents or processes:

- *Antecedents* are those variables that shape how student learning and acquisition of civic-related understandings and perceptions takes place. Note that these factors are level-specific and may be influenced by antecedents or processes at a higher level. For example, civic-related training of teachers may be affected by historical factors and/or policies implemented at the national level.
- *Processes* are those variables related to civic-related learning and the acquisition of understandings, competencies, and dispositions. They are constrained by antecedents and possibly influenced by variables relating to the higher levels of the multi-level structure.

10 Because of the sampling design for ICCS, school level and classroom level cannot be disentangled. Generally, only one classroom will be selected within each sampled school.

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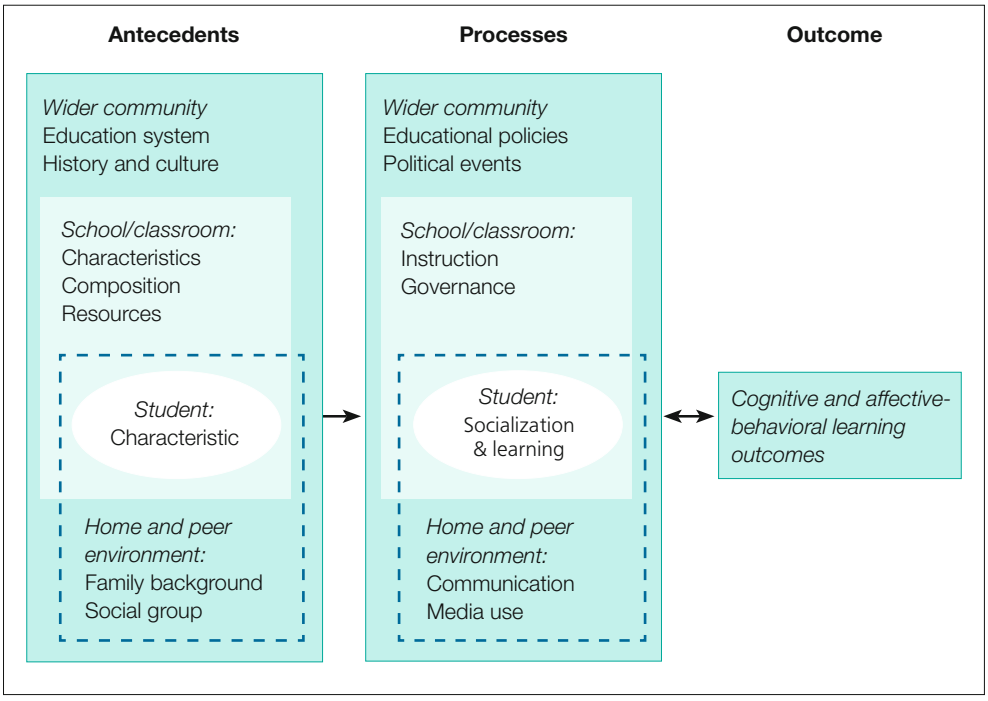
Antecedents and processes are variables that have potential impact on the outcomes at the level of the individual student. Learning outcomes related to civic and citizenship education at the student level also can be viewed as aggregates at higher levels (school, country) where they can affect factors related to process. For example, higher levels of civic understanding and engagement among students may influence the way schools teach civic and citizenship education.

Figure 3.1 illustrates contextual variables which might influence the learning outcomes of civic and citizenship education. There is a reciprocal relationship between processes and outcomes, which emphasizes that "feedback" may occur between civic-related learning outcomes and processes. For example, students with higher levels of civic knowledge and engagement are those students most likely to participate in activities (at school, at home, and within the community) that promote these outcomes.

There is a unidirectional relationship between antecedents and processes at each level. However, higher-level processes may influence antecedents, and it is likely that, from a long-term perspective, outcomes may affect variables that are antecedents for learning processes.

Figure 3.1: Contexts for the development of learning outcomes related to civic and citizenship education



This contextual framework for ICCS makes it possible to map variables for which data are collected on a three-by-four grid, with antecedents, processes, and outcomes as columns, and the levels of country/community, school/classroom, student, and home environment as rows (Table 3.1). Although the last column for outcomes is not split into levels, it is important to recognize that, for the analysis, aggregates can also be used at wider community or school/classroom levels.[11]

Table 3.1 shows examples of potential variables (or groups of variables) collected with different ICCS instruments for each cell in this grid. Variables related to the context of country/community are collected primarily through the national contexts survey and other possible data sources. Variables related to the context of schools and classrooms are collected through the school and teacher questionnaires. The student background questionnaire provides information on antecedents of the individual student and the home environment as well as about some process-related variables (for example, learning activities). The student test and the student perceptions questionnaire will collect data on outcomes. In addition, the student background questionnaire will include questions regarding student participation in civic-related activities, which will also be used as indicators of active citizenship related to Content domain 3 (civic practices).

Some potential variables that can be measured at one level pertaining to another level are not included in the mapping shown in Table 3.1. Student observations of learning practices in the classroom can be aggregated and used as classroom or school variables. Student, school, and teacher questionnaires might also provide civic-related information about the context of the local community.

Table 3.1: Mapping of variables to contextual framework (examples)

Level of ...	Antecedents	Processes	Outcomes
Wider community	NCS & other sources: Democratic history Structure of education	NCS & other sources: Intended curriculum Political developments	StT & StQ/RQ: Test results Student attitudes and engagement
School/classroom	ScQ & TQ: School characteristics Resources	ScQ & TQ: Implemented curriculum Policies and practices	
Student	StQ: Gender Age	StQ: Civic learning Practiced engagement	
Home and peer environment	StQ: Parent SES Ethnicity Language Country of birth	StQ: Family communication Communication with peers Media information	

Note: NCS = national contexts survey; ScQ = school questionnaire; TQ = teacher questionnaire; RQ = regional questionnaire; StQ = student questionnaire; StT = student test; SES = socioeconomic status.

11 Note that similar conceptualizations have been used for the planning of other international studies (see, for example, Harvey-Beavis, 2002; OECD, 2005; Travers, &Westbury, 1989; Travers et al., 1989).

3.2 The context of the wider community

The context of the wider community can be viewed as consisting of different levels: the local community in which students' schools, as well as home and peer environments, are embedded within broader contexts of regional, national, and possibly supranational contexts. Within the scope of ICCS, the level of the community and the level of the national context are the most relevant levels.

3.2.1 The context of the educational system

To study the ways students develop civic-related dispositions and competencies and acquire understandings with regard to their role as citizens, it is important to take variables found at the country level into account. Historical background, the political system, the structure of education, and the curriculum provide important contextual information when interpreting results from an international assessment of civic and citizenship education. Data from official statistics will provide a range context data at the level of countries regarding the structure of the education system, the nature of the political system, and the economic and social context of the society. However, comparable data from published sources will not always be available to provide a picture of the context for civic and citizenship education in all participating countries.

The national contexts survey for ICCS 2016 is designed to collect systematically relevant data that are not always available from existing sources. These data include information on the structure of national education systems, education policies and approaches to civic and citizenship education, teacher training in general and for civic and citizenship education in particular, and approaches to assessment and quality assurance regarding the area of civic and citizenship education. The survey also collects information on current debates and reforms regarding this learning area.

Data from published sources and from the national contexts survey will be used to compare profiles of civic and citizenship education in participating countries. In addition, national context data will be used for the analysis of differences among countries in student knowledge and engagement related to civic and citizenship education.

The structure of the education system: Despite a number of global trends in education that have led to similarities in policies and structures (Benavot, Cha, Kamens, Meyer, & Wong, 1991), the differences between education systems continue to have a considerable effect on the outcomes of education (Baker, & LeTendre, 2005). To capture these basic differences, ICCS 2016 collects data on the structure of school education (study programs, public/private school management, types of primary and secondary education institutions), the autonomy of educational providers, and the length of compulsory schooling.

Education policies regarding civic and citizenship education: Results from ICCS 2009 (Ainley et al., 2013) showed that the status of and priority given to civic and citizenship education were mostly regarded as low across participating countries. Generally, civic goals were deemed as important, however, there were varying approaches regarding the delivery of curricular content across countries, either through its integration into different subjects, teaching as part of a distinct subject, and/or definition as a cross-curricular learning area. ICCS 2009 findings also highlighted the fact that explicit civic and citizenship education often starts after students reached the age of 14.

The last decade has witnessed numerous examples of educational reforms in many countries, with the overall aim of improving educational provision and outcomes, including those concerning civic and citizenship education. Many of these educational reforms were implemented in response to the challenges of learning and living in modern societies, as well as changes in political systems (Ainley et al., 2013; Cox, Jaramillo, & Reimers, 2005).

The ICCS 2016 national contexts survey collects data on the definition of, and the priority given to, civic and citizenship education in the educational policy and its provision in each participating country at the time of the data collection. National centers will provide information about official definition of civic and citizenship education, its place in the curriculum in primary and secondary education, and its main goals. National centers are also asked about the potential influence of historical, cultural, political, and other contexts on the character of and approach to civic and citizenship education, and whether there have been any changes since the previous survey in 2009.

Civic and citizenship education and school curriculum approaches: Countries take different approaches to the implementation of civic and citizenship education in their curricula and the ways civic and citizenship education is generally implemented vary considerably across countries (Ainley et al., 2013; Cox et al., 2005; Eurydice, 2005). Some educational systems have it in the national curriculum as a compulsory or optional (stand-alone) subject, whereas others include it through integration into other subjects. An alternative approach to civic and citizenship education is to implement it as a cross-curricular theme or through the so called "whole school approach". ICCS 2009 results showed that in many education systems and/or schools more than one approach is implemented at the same time (Ainley et al., 2013).

With regard to school curriculum approaches for civic and citizenship education, Eurydice (2012) distinguished (i) promotion through steering documents such a national curricula or other recommendations/regulations, (ii) support for school-based programs and projects, and (iii) the establishment of political structures (such as school parliaments). In this context it is also important to review the extent to which schools in different countries provide support for civic and citizenship education through school culture or ethos, democratic school governance, and the establishment of links with the wider community (Birzea et al., 2004; Eurydice, 2012). Results from ICCS 2009 showed that many countries include recommendations with regard to the establishment of democratic school practices in their educational policies (see Ainley et al., 2013).

The national contexts survey in ICCS 2016 gathers data on the inclusion of civic and citizenship education (as a separate subject, or integrated into different subjects, or as cross-curricular approach) in the formal curriculum at different stages of schooling and in different study programs. The survey also captures the names of specific curriculum subjects and whether they are compulsory or optional in each study program. Furthermore, the national contexts survey gathers data on goals of the national or official curricula for civic and citizenship education regarding the inclusion of specific contexts with regard to whole school approaches, school curriculum approaches, student participation or parental involvement, and links to the wider community.

Because ICCS 2016 surveys students at a specific target grade in lower secondary programs (typically Grade 8), it will be important to gather information about the curricular context for civic and citizenship education in this particular grade. Furthermore, national centers are asked to report on the specification of topics, objectives and processes when implementing the school curriculum, as well as specifications regarding the amount of instructional time given to civic and citizenship education.

Teachers and civic and citizenship education: The teacher survey undertaken as part of the CIVED survey showed a great deal of diversity in the subject-matter background, professional development, and work experience of those teachers involved in civic and citizenship education (Losito, & Mintrop, 2001). With regard to teacher training in this field, research showed a rather limited and inconsistent approach to in-service training and professional development (Birzea et al., 2004; Eurydice, 2005, 2012). The results of the ICCS 2009 national contexts survey showed that, in most participating countries, pre-service and in-service training was provided but, in most cases, this provision was reported as non-mandatory (Schulz et al., 2010b, pp. 53–56).

To assess the variety of different approaches to teacher education in the field at the level of education systems, the national contexts survey in ICCS 2016 collects general data about the requirements for becoming a teacher and about licensing or certification procedures for teachers. More specifically, the survey also gathers data about the characteristics of teachers of civic and citizenship education and the extent to which civic and citizenship education is part of pre-service or initial teacher education, and on the availability of in-service or continuing professional development education in general, and for civic and citizenship education in particular, from the providers of these activities.

Assessment and quality assurance in civic and citizenship education: Comparisons of assessment and quality assurance for civic and citizenship education are difficult and complex due to the diversity of approaches to teaching this subject area across countries. In particular, research in Europe shows that, in most countries, and compared to other subject areas, monitoring and quality assurance in civic and citizenship education are often unconnected and carried out on a small scale (Birzea et al., 2004). However, over the last decade, some countries have started to implement nationwide assessments of civic and citizenship education (Ainley et al., 2013; Eurydice, 2012).

The national contexts survey includes questions about the extent of assessment in the area of civic and citizenship education at the country's target grade, and how parents are informed about current approaches to this field of learning.

3.2.2 The context of the local community and school–community relationships

Schools and homes of students are located in communities that vary in their economic, cultural, and social resources, and in their organizational features. Inclusive communities that value community relations and facilitate active citizen engagement, especially if they are well resourced, may offer civic and citizenship opportunities for partnerships and involvement to schools and individuals. Social and cultural stimuli arising from the local community, as well as the availability of cultural and social resources, may influence young people's civic and citizenship knowledge, dispositions, and competencies in relation to their roles as citizens (Jennings, Stoker, & Bowers, 2001). Data on the contexts and characteristics of the local community will be gathered primarily through the school questionnaire.

Urbanization: There is evidence that students from non-urban school contexts often perform at lower achievement levels than those from urban schools (see, for example, Istrate, Noveanu, & Smith, 2006; Webster, & Fisher, 2000; Williams, 2005). Data on school location (urbanization) were used in multi-level analyses carried out in ICCS 2009. In most countries, a rural school location had no significant effect on students' civic knowledge, after controlling for other variables (see Schulz et al., 2010b, pp. 230-232). Urbanization was associated with student knowledge in only a few countries. In Latin American countries, there were significant differences in civic knowledge between rural and urban schools that were largely associated with the socioeconomic background of individual students and their schools (Schulz, Ainley, Friedman, & Lietz, 2011, p. 78). As in ICCS 2009, the ICCS 2016 school questionnaire includes a question about the size of the community in which the school was located.

Availability of resources in the local community: Differences in the quantity and quality of resources for citizenship learning available in the local area may have a dual effect. On the one hand, they may favor the organization of community-oriented projects and student participation in projects requiring the development of activities involving the community, both of which can contribute to developing skills and competencies related to civic and citizenship education. On the other hand, community participation in the life of the school and in its various levels can be a factor for greater openness and democratization of the school itself. Furthermore, the level of resources may influence the possibilities for the provision of local support to schools, which may have an impact on school improvement (Reezigt, & Creemers, 2005). In ICCS 2009, differences regarding the availability of resources in the local community were associated with students' civic knowledge in several countries (see Schulz et al., 2010b). They also provided an additional measure of the schools' economic and social contexts. The question used in ICCS 2009 is also included in the ICCS 2016 school questionnaire, with minor modifications.

Issues of social tension in the community: As part of the community within which it is located, the school may be affected by issues and problems existing at the community level. Issues of social tension within the local community may influence students' social relationships and the quality of their social lives and everyday experiences, both outside and inside the school (L'Homme, & Jerez Henríquez, 2010). In addition to that, students' actual opportunities to volunteer or participate in civic-related activities in the communities may be influenced by the social climate existing in the local communities within which schools are located. A safe social environment is likely to enhance students' activities and participation in the local community. Conversely, issues creating social tensions and conflicts in the local community may discourage students' involvement in civic activities. In ICCS 2009, principals were asked about their perceptions of social tension in the community, and the results showed a negative association between higher levels of perceived social tension and students' civic knowledge (Schulz et al., 2010b, pp. 164–165). The ICCS 2016 school questionnaire includes a similar question, with minor modifications, to that used in the previous survey.

Students' participation in civic-related activities in the local community: Research has illustrated the importance of students' activities in the community and their reflection on them for the construction and the development of knowledge and skills for active citizenship (Annette, 2008; Henderson, Pancer, & Brown, 2013). The links between the school and its community represent an opportunity for motivating student

participation in activities related to civic and citizenship education, and for offering them opportunities for civic engagement. Schools' interactions with their local communities, and the links that have been established with other civic-related and political institutions, can also influence student perceptions of their relationship with the wider community and of the different roles they may play in it (Annette, 2000, 2008; Potter, 2002; Torney-Purta, & Barber, 2004). ICCS 2009 showed that most of the students in almost all the participating countries had at least some opportunities to participate in such activities (Schulz et al., 2010b, pp. 154–155). The ICCS 2016 school questionnaire includes a modified form of the ICCS 2009 question about principals' perceptions of the opportunities students have to participate in activities carried out by the school in cooperation with external groups or organizations.

In ICCS 2009 the teacher questionnaire also included a question on student participation in civic-related activities in the local community, which was similar to the question included in the school questionnaire (*Teachers' perceptions of student activities in the community*). Results were generally consistent with those associated with principals' answers (Schulz et al., 2010b, pp. 152–153). Comparisons between the principals' and teachers' reports provide a broader picture of what schools actually do from different perspectives and viewpoints. The ICCS 2016 teacher questionnaire uses a similar question to that in the previous survey, which asks teachers whether they had participated with their students in activities in cooperation with external groups or organizations.

3.3 The contexts of schools and classrooms

As in the previous survey, ICCS 2016 considers students' learning outcomes in the field of civic and citizenship education not only as a result of teaching and learning processes, but also as the result of their daily experience at school. School experiences and their impact on learning outcomes are of particular importance in the context of civic and citizenship education, which is meant to develop learning outcomes that are not confined to the area of cognitive achievement, but also include attitudes and dispositions (Schulz et al., 2008)[12]. A large number of countries place emphasis on non-formal aspects of civic learning through participation and engagement or social interaction at schools (Ainley et al., 2013; Eurydice, 2005, 2012; Schulz et al., 2010b).

Students' experience at school not only depends on the teaching and learning developed at a classroom level, but also on the possibilities they have to experience the classroom and the school as a "democratic learning environment" (through participation at a school level, school and classroom climate, as well as the quality of the relationships within the school, between teacher and students, and among students) (Bäckman, & Trafford, 2007; Huddleston, 2007; Trafford, 2003). The possibility of establishing and experiencing relationships and behaviors based on openness, mutual respect, and respect for diversity, as well as the possibility of giving and asserting personal opinions, allow students to practice a democratic lifestyle, to begin exercising their own autonomy, and to develop a sense of self-efficacy (see Mosher et al., 1994; Pasek et al., 2008). Recent research has also stressed the importance of informal learning at school for the development of students' active citizenship (Scheerens, 2009).

12 According to the UN resolution "Education for Democracy" (United Nations, 2012), schools are not only seen as responsible for delivering human rights education and citizenship curricula, but also for "extracurricular educational activities aimed at the promotion and consolidation of democratic values and democratic governance and human rights, taking into account innovative approaches and best practices in the field, in order to facilitate citizens' empowerment and participation in political life and policymaking at all levels."

In view of the importance of school and classroom contexts for civic and citizenship education, ICCS 2016 makes use of the following types of questions:

- School questionnaire questions measuring principals' perceptions of school contexts and characteristics
- Teacher questionnaire questions about the background of teachers and their perceptions of school and classroom contexts
- Student questionnaire questions about students' perceptions of school and classroom contexts.

3.3.1 School contexts and characteristics

School climate generally refers to "the shared beliefs, the relations between individuals and groups in the organization, the physical surroundings, and the characteristics of individuals and groups participating in the organization" (Van Houtte, 2005, p. 85). In a civic and citizenship education context, school climate can be referred to as "impressions, beliefs, and expectations held by members of the school community about their school as a learning environment, their associated behavior, and the symbols and institutions that represent the patterned expressions of the behavior" (Homana, Barber, & Torney-Purta, 2006, p. 3). A variety of learning situations can affect civic and citizenship education at schools. These include management, everyday activities within the school, the support for professional relationships inside the school itself, and the quality of links between the school and the outside community (Thapa, Cohen, Guffey, & Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2013).

School climate also relates to the school culture and ethos that contribute to defining the school as a social organization, as well as distinguishing each individual school from others (Stoll, 1999). School culture refers to patterns of meaning that include norms, beliefs, and traditions shared by the members of the school community, and that contribute to shaping their thinking and the way they act (Stolp, 1994).

School climate and culture may contribute to the development among students and teachers of a sense of belonging to the school, thereby enhancing the commitment and motivation that these groups have toward improving school educational activities (Knowles, & McCafferty-Wright, 2015). Participative governance practices contribute to characterizing the schools as democratic learning environments, and promoting teachers' participation in school governance helps the school to understand the variety of student learning needs and secure teachers' commitment to supporting school educational activities (Ranson, Farrell, Peim, & Smith, 2005).

The ICCS 2016 school questionnaire includes a wide range of questions related to school climate, which measure principals' perceptions of teachers' and students' sense of belonging to the school, teachers', students' and parents' participation in decision-making processes, teachers' participation in school governance, the extent of bullying at school, and principals' reports on activities to prevent bullying.

Principals' perceptions of the engagement of the school community: Different styles of leadership and different strategies and procedures available to principals when exercising their role may also impact on the school climate and culture (Edmonds, 1979; Eurydice, 2013; Ishimaru, 2013; Marzano, 2003; Scheerens, Glas, & Thomas, 2003; Sammons, Gu, Day, & Ko, 2011). Therefore, a study of contexts for civic and citizenship education also needs to investigate how principals exercise their role in relation to the development

of a democratic school environment, which is open to teachers', students', and parents' participation in decision-making processes (Torrance, 2013). ICCS 2016 includes a question on the extent to which teachers, parents and students are involved in decision-making processes. The School questionnaire also includes a question on principals' reports of students' participation as class representatives and in school elections that had been included in ICCS 2009.

Principals' perceptions of teacher participation in school governance: Empowering teachers to participate in decision-making at schools may contribute to active citizenship behavior within schools (Bogler, & Somech, 2005). The ICCS 2009 school questionnaire included seven items concerned with principals' perceptions of teacher participation in school governance. These questions were intended to provide information about the extent to which teachers were willing to accept responsibilities beyond teaching. Using a modified question, the ICCS 2016 school questionnaire measures perceptions of principals regarding teachers' participation in school governance, teachers' support for maintaining good discipline, and teachers' willingness to become members of the school council.

Principals' perceptions of bullying at school: Bullying is defined as including aggressive behaviors intended to hurt someone either physically, emotionally, verbally or through the internet (AERA [American Educational Research Association], 2013; Olweus, 1973; Wade, & Beran, 2011). In the ICCS 2016 school questionnaire, principals are asked to report on the frequency of aggressive behaviors they observe within the school.

Principals' reports on activities to prevent bullying: Schools are currently facing the problem of bullying both in the school context and in a cyber context (AERA, 2013; Corcoran, & Mc Guckin, 2014). Research has shown that bullying shows considerable variation between classes within schools (Atria, Strohmeier, & Spiel, 2007; Salmivalli, 2012). Although a "culture of silence" still persists among victims, activities to highlight bullying seem to have an impact, and may help to reduce bullying inside schools (Smith, & Shu, 2000); prevention programs seem to have greater effect at the classroom level than at the school level (Kärnä et al., 2011). The school questionnaire includes a question on the initiatives implemented by schools intended to prevent bullying, including specific professional training aimed at the prevention of "cyberbullying" (Wade, & Beran, 2011).

Principals' reports on activities related to environmental sustainability: Education for sustainable development (ESD), which aims at developing the learner's competence as a community member and global citizen, is increasingly viewed as an important aspect of citizenship education (Huckle, 2008). ESD is intended to be interdisciplinary and holistic, and therefore should be represented throughout the curriculum. In view of this aim, it is argued that it needs to involve the whole school community rather than just being a teacher-driven activity (Henderson, & Tilbury, 2004). The ICCS 2016 school questionnaire includes questions on initiatives related to environmental sustainability. Principals are asked about the initiatives undertaken by the schools in order to become environments that respect the principles of sustainable development ("sustainable schools"; see Henderson, & Tilbury, 2004) and to enable students to experience these principles directly (for example, through school initiatives to save energy, to reduce and separate waste, to purchase environmentally-friendly items, and, more generally, to encourage students' environmental-friendly behaviors).

Principals' reports of students' access to ICT and to internet for their learning activities: The rapid increase in usage of internet and new social media in youth has several important educational implications. Formal education in new social media literacy has been shown to increase civic participation and provide students with access to diverse viewpoints (Kahne, 2010). In view of this development, ICCS 2016 also investigates the school context for students' use of social media for civic engagement. The school questionnaire collects information about the technological resources available at school and about the actual access students have to them.

Principals' reports on the delivery of civic and citizenship education at school: Many studies have shown that approaches to civic and citizenship education vary considerably across countries (Ainley et al., 2013; Birzea et al., 2004; Cox et al., 2005; Eurydice, 2005, 2012). Furthermore, ICCS 2009 results illustrated that different approaches to this learning area may actually coexist within the same schools (Schulz et al., 2010b, pp. 178–179). Principals from schools surveyed in ICCS 2009 provided interesting information on how they rated the most important aims of civic and citizenship education. Results showed notable differences across participating countries and that, generally, school principals regarded the most relevant aims of civic and citizenship education to be those related to the development of knowledge and skills (Schulz et al., 2010b, pp. 184–185). As in the previous survey cycle, the ICCS 2016 school questionnaire includes a set of questions on principals' reports about the way civic and citizenship education is delivered at their schools, on their perceptions of the importance of the aims of civic and citizenship education, and how specific responsibilities for civic and citizenship education are assigned within their schools.

Principals' reports on school autonomy for the delivery of civic and citizenship education: The school improvement literature shows that enabling some degree of autonomy favors the success of improvement efforts (Reezigt, & Creemers, 2005). The level of autonomy possessed by schools may influence the way civic and citizenship education is delivered at a school level (curriculum planning, choice of textbooks and teaching materials, assessment procedures and tools). The existence of national legislation, regulations and standards concerning the results that students should achieve does not necessarily imply that schools deliver similar programs and approaches to teaching (Eurydice, 2007). The time allocated to citizenship education, teacher qualifications, and the support the principals provide to civic and citizenship education within schools may vary (Keating, & Kerr, 2013; Keating, Kerr, Benton, Mundy, & Lopes, 2010). The ICCS 2016 school questionnaire includes a question about the schools' autonomy to select textbooks, instigate student assessment procedures, plan curriculum, activities and projects related to civic and citizenship education, and implement teacher training.

Principals' report on school characteristics: School resources consist of both material and human resources, and there is no consensus on the extent to which these school resources can contribute to school development and improvement (Hanushek, 1994, 1997, 2006). The ICCS 2009 school questionnaire included questions about the *demographic characteristics of schools* (public/private school, number of students, number of target grade students, and number of teachers). Research has shown associations between these characteristics and learning outcomes (Anderson, Ryan, & Shapiro, 1989). In the analysis for the ICCS 2009 Latin American report, statistically significant differences in civic knowledge between public and private schools were found in some countries, even after controlling for the socioeconomic context (Schulz, Ainley, Friedman, & Lietz,

2011, p. 73). As in the previous survey, the ICCS 2016 school questionnaire includes questions related to school characteristics like private or public school management, and the number of male and female students at school (overall and enrolled in the target grade).

Principals' perceptions of students' backgrounds: Research has emphasized the importance of the average socioeconomic family background of students at the level of individual schools (see, for example, Sirin, 2005). To capture the "social intake", the ICCS 2016 school questionnaire includes a question adopted from PIRLS 2011 (Mullis, Martin, Kennedy, Trong, & Sainsbury, 2009) that asked school principals to provide approximate percentages of students from economically disadvantaged or affluent homes.

3.3.2 Teacher background and their perceptions of schools and classrooms

The ICCS 2016 teacher questionnaire is administered to all teachers teaching at each country target grade regardless of their subject area. It is designed to capture the background of teachers, as well as a wide range of perceptions of school and classroom contexts. As in ICCS 2009, the ICCS 2016 teacher questionnaire includes an international option, with questions about civic and citizenship education at school and on the teaching practices actually adopted in this learning area. This part of the questionnaire is only completed by teachers of subjects related to civic and citizenship education.

Teachers' reports on their background characteristics: Similar to ICCS 2009, the ICCS 2016 teacher questionnaire includes a set of items asking about teachers' demographic variables (gender, age) and the subject/s taught in general and at the target grade.

Teachers' participation in school governance: Teacher participation in school governance can be regarded as part of democratic governance processes at school and as a factor that can contribute to the characterization of the school as a democratic learning environment (Council of Europe, 2007). The ICCS 2009 teacher questionnaire comprised a set of seven items asking teachers about their participation in school governance. The items of the questions are the same as those included in the parallel question of the school questionnaire and formed a scale that was included in the international database. A similar question composed of five items is included in the 2016 teacher questionnaire. The items refer to teacher willingness to take on responsibilities besides teaching, and their reflections on the extent to which they are willing to cooperate with other teachers, cooperate to solve conflicts within the school, and engage in guidance and counseling activities.

Teachers' perceptions of bullying at school: Teacher behaviour has been identified as an explanatory variable of bullying at schools (Roland, & Galloway, 2002), which may be related to their function as role models and authorities in classroom interactions (Verkuyten, & Thijs 2002).The teacher questionnaire includes a question, which is (in a slightly modified version) also included in the school questionnaire, and is designed to capture teachers' perceptions of bullying within the school (Olweus, 1973).

Teachers' perceptions of school climate: The school climate and the quality of the relations within the school (student-teacher relations and student-student relations) may influence student academic achievement (Bear, Yang, Pell, & Gaskins, 2014) and may also be associated with bullying at school (Powell, Powell, & Petrosko, 2015). The ICCS

2009 teacher questionnaire included two sets of items related to teachers' perceptions of school climate. The items referred to teachers' perceptions of student behaviors at school and to teachers' perceptions of social problems at school. Both questions are also included in the 2016 teacher questionnaire.

Teachers' perceptions of classroom climate: Classroom climate is a general concept, where definitions focus mainly on the level of cooperation in teaching and learning activities, fairness of grading, and social support. Democratic classroom climate focuses mainly on the implementation of democratic and liberal values in the classroom (Ehman, 1980; Hahn, 1999). A democratic classroom climate may help students in understanding the advantages of democratic values and practices, and may have a positive effect on their active assimilation (Perliger, Canetti-Nisim, & Pedahzur, 2006). As some studies have pointed out, aside from teachers' perceptions, what critically matters are the students' perceptions of classroom climate (Hooghe, & Quintelier, 2013). The ICCS 2009 teacher questionnaire included a set of items asking teachers about their perception of classroom climate and about students' participation in classroom activities. The four items formed a scale that was included in the ICCS 2009 database. Results showed positive associations with civic knowledge in a number of countries (Schulz et al., 2010b, p. 173). The question is also included in the ICCS 2016 teacher questionnaire.

Teachers' perceptions of activities related to environmental sustainability: As in the ICCS 2016 school questionnaire, the teacher questionnaire includes a question that asks about teachers' involvement in initiatives and programs related to environmental sustainability (Kyburz-Graber, 2013; Lundholm, Hopwood, & Kelsey, 2013; UNESCO, 2012a). The items included in the question are related to activities that enhance students direct involvement and engagement both within the school and in the local community, as well as their awareness of the impact of their behaviors on environment.

Teachers' perceptions of the delivery of civic and citizenship education at school: The ICCS 2009 teacher questionnaire included two set of items related to the way civic and citizenship education is delivered at the school level. The two questions asked teachers about their perceptions of the importance of the aims of civic and citizenship education, and about how specific responsibilities for civic and citizenship education are assigned within the school. With respect to the importance of different aims of civic and citizenship education, results were very similar to those of the school questionnaire (Schulz et al., 2010b, pp. 182–183). ICCS 2016 includes slightly modified questions related to the aims of civic and citizenship education in both teacher and school questionnaires.

Teachers' perceptions of ICT use for teaching and learning: Research has shown widespread use of ICT in secondary education, as well as considerable differences in the equipment of schools with ICT resources (see Fraillon, Ainley, Schulz, Friedman, & Gebhardt, 2014). ICCS 2016 asks teachers to indicate whether and to what extent their schools provide them with a set of electronic devices with an internet connection that they can use for their teaching activities at the target grade. A similar question (with a focus on resource provisions) is also included in the school questionnaire.

Teachers' perceptions of their teaching of subjects related to civic and citizenship education: Studies have shown that teacher preparation is one of the most important factors influencing student achievement (see OECD, 2009, 2014b). With regard to civic and citizenship education, teacher training is a particular challenge for educational policies,

and in many countries no specific training is provided to teachers in this area (Birzea et al., 2004; Eurydice, 2005, 2012). Following a classification developed by Shulman (1986, 1987), teacher knowledge may relate to topics related to civic and citizenship education (content knowledge), or to teaching methods and approaches (pedagogical knowledge). Furthermore, there are a wide range of teaching approaches in this learning area (Munn, Brown, & Ross, 2012). Results from ICCS 2009 showed that teachers of civic-related subjects tended to be most confident about teaching citizens' rights and responsibilities and human rights, while they were less confident in teaching topics related to the economy, business and legal institutions (Schulz et al., 2010b). Also using questions that are identical to questions from the ICCS 2009, the section of the ICCS 2016 teacher questionnaire administered to teachers who teach subjects related to civic and citizenship education collects data on the following aspects:

- Teachers' reports about the planning of civic and citizenship education (use of different sources) and about teaching and learning activities (such as "interactive teaching", "traditional" teaching, and discussion of controversial issues in classrooms).
- Teachers' reports on the use of different assessment tools in their teaching of civic and citizenship education.
- Teachers' preparation in teaching civic and citizenship related topics.
- Teachers' perceptions of possible improvements to the teaching of civic and citizenship education at their schools.
- Teachers' reports on their preparation and in-service training on topics relating to civic and citizenship education (content knowledge) or teaching methods and approaches.

3.3.3 Student perceptions of the context of schools and classrooms

Students' perceptions of the school and classroom context encompass the classroom climate for civic and citizenship education, student reports on their civic learning experiences, students' experience with verbal and physical abuse, and students' perceptions of school climate.

Classroom climate for civic and citizenship education at school: The CIVED survey included a set of items measuring students' perceptions of what happened in their civic education classes. Six items were used to measure an index of open climate for classroom discussion (see Schulz, 2004) that had earlier been identified as a positive predictor of civic knowledge, and students' expectations to vote as an adult (Torney-Purta et al., 2001). The ICCS 2009 survey used a similar instrument that measured students' perceptions of what happens in their classrooms during discussions of political and social issues. Results of multivariate analyses confirmed the association of this construct with civic-related learning outcomes (Schulz et al., 2010b). The ICCS 2016 student questionnaire includes a question with six items from ICCS 2009, designed to measure students' perceptions of an open classroom climate for discussion of civic issues.

Students' reports on learning experiences regarding civic issues: CIVED 1999 asked students to report how much they had learned about civic issues at school. Students' answers to how much they had learned about the importance of voting at school were used as a (positive) predictor to explain variation in expected participation in elections (Torney-Purta et al., 2001). The ICCS 2016 student questionnaire includes a new question asking students to assess how much they have learned in school about seven different political or social issues.

Students' perceptions of opportunities to learn about civic issues related to Europe: The European regional questionnaire of ICCS 2009 asked students about the opportunities they had to learn about Europe at school, and results showed that majorities of students across participating countries reported learning about a wide range of issues (Kerr et al., 2010). The European regional questionnaire for ICCS 2016 includes a modified question designed to measure the extent of the opportunities given to students to learn about civic issues related to Europe.

Students' perceptions of school climate: School climate is widely regarded as an important factor in explaining student learning outcomes (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Easton, & Leppescu, 2010; Wang, & Degol, 2015). Scheerens and Bosker (1997) viewed school climate as a synonym for a school culture that manifests a range of variables centered on student engagement, student absenteeism, student conduct and behavior, staff motivation, and the relationships among students, teachers, and the school itself. More recent conceptions characterize school climate as being made up of four aspects: academic climate and the prioritizing of successful learning, interpersonal relationships within the school and with parents, physical and emotional safety, and organizational effectiveness (Wang, & Degol, 2015). The importance of a positive school climate for engaging students in civic-related learning experiences has also been emphasized in research about civic learning (see for example, Homana et al., 2006). The ICCS 2009 student questionnaire included a set of two items measuring students' perceptions of school and five items measuring students' perceptions of student–teacher relationships at school. ICCS 2016 includes five items (four of them had been used in the previous survey) designed to capture students' perceptions of student–teacher relationships at school, three additional items to gauge students' perceptions of social interaction between students at their school, and one item reflecting students' perception of the risk of being bullied at school.

Students' reports on personal experiences of bullying and abuse: One symptom of social disintegration and dysfunctional social interaction at school is "bullying", which has been discussed in research since the 1970s (Olweus, 1973). Bullying has continued to be a focus for educational researchers as well as practitioners (Goldsmid, & Howie, 2014; Smith, 2004; Ttofi, & Farrington, 2011), and the emergence of "cyber bullying" has raised awareness of bullying even further. Bullying has also been identified as a factor affecting school perceptions (Bayar, & Uçanok, 2012). The Latin American questionnaire in ICCS 2009 included items measuring students' experience of verbal or physical aggression at school, and results showed that, in the participating countries in this region, many students reported physical aggression in their school environment (Schulz, Ainley, Friedman, & Lietz, 2011). The international student questionnaire for ICCS 2016 will ask students about the level of verbal or physical abuse faced by students at school using a set of six items.

3.4 The home and peer context

The home and peer contexts and characteristics that can influence the development of young people's knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs in the context of civics and citizenship are considerable. They include family- and peer-group interactions, educational resources in the home, culture, religion, values, use of the test language at home, the relationship status the young person has within the family, parental education, incomes and employment levels, access to different kinds of media, the quality of the school–

home connections, and the wide range of civic-related opportunities out of school that the young person can exercise. Among all of these, family background tends to be particularly emphasized as a likely influence on learning outcomes in general, as well as related to civic and citizenship education.

Research findings have highlighted the importance of family background for the development of dispositions toward engagement by and participation of young people (Bengston, Biblarz, & Roberts, 2002; Janoski, & Wilson, 1995; Lauglo, 2011; Renshon, 1975; Grusec, & Kuczynski, 1997; Vollebergh, Iedema, & Raaijmakers, 2001). There is a general consensus that family background is an influential variable in the political development of adolescents (Sherrod, Torney-Purta, & Flanagan, 2010). The role of socioeconomic background can be seen as influential in (i) providing a more stimulating environment, and (ii) enhancing the educational attainment and future prospects of adolescents, factors that, in turn, foster political involvement as an individual resource.

Studies of political socialization and participation emphasize the importance of the extent to which families and individuals can access different forms of capital. Bourdieu (1986) saw economic capital as the sources of other forms of capital, and distinguished between human, cultural, and social capital. Whereas *human capital* refers to an individual's skills, knowledge, and qualifications, *cultural capital* refers to those "widely shared, high-status cultural signals (attitudes, preferences, formal knowledge, and behaviors) used for social and cultural exclusion" (Lamont, & Lareau, 1988, p. 156). *Social capital* is conceptualized as a societal resource that links citizens to one another so that they can achieve goals more effectively (see Stolle, 2002).

In his study of institutional performance in Italy, Putnam (1993, p. 185) regarded *social capital* as the "key to making democracy work." His conceptual view built on Coleman's (1988) concept of social capital as being generated by the relational structure of interactions inside and outside the family, and facilitating the success of an individual's actions and also their learning outcomes.[13] According to Putnam (1993), three components of social capital (social trust, social norms, and social networks) form a "virtuous cycle" that provides a context for successful cooperation and participation in a society.

Social capital research has used a varying range of different factors, including socioeconomic status, personal networks, membership of organizations, interpersonal trust, and personal communication (media, or discussions). Consequently, the concept of social capital has often been criticized for its lack of clarity and the problems it presents in terms of finding suitable indicators (Woolcock, 2001).

Within the context of ICCS, the concept of social capital is viewed as helpful in that it describes mechanisms that explain why some students have higher levels of civic knowledge and engagement than others. Measures of different aspects of social capital (trust, norms, and social interaction) include attitudinal and background variables. Some variables reflecting social capital are related to the home environment, in particular interactions with parents, peers, and media. Other variables relevant in this context are measures of interpersonal trust and voluntary participation in civic-related organizations (see the Civic and Citizenship Framework in section 2).

13 Putnam's view of social capital, however, is narrower and more specific than Coleman's concept. Putnam saw social capital as a collective resource and stated that horizontal interactions tend to foster trust and participation, whereas vertical relationships lead to distrust and disengagement (Stolle, & Lewis, 2002).

Variables related to the home environment that are antecedents of student learning and development and are measured through the student background questionnaire include (i) parental socioeconomic status, (ii) cultural and ethnic background, (iii) parental interest in political and social issues, and (iv) family composition. The ICCS 2016 student background questionnaire also collects data on process-related variables that reflect social interactions outside of school (for example, discussing political and social issues with parents and peers, as well as accessing media information).

Students' parental socioeconomic background: Socioeconomic status (SES) is widely regarded as an important explanatory factor that influences learning outcomes in many different and complex ways (Sirin, 2005). There is a general consensus that socioeconomic status is represented by income, education, and occupation (Gottfried, 1985; Hauser, 1994) and that using all three variables is better than using only one (White, 1982). However, there is no consensus among researchers regarding which measures should be used in any one analysis (Entwistle, & Astone, 1994; Hauser, 1994). In international studies, additional caveats imposed on the validity of background measures and the cross-national comparability of family background measures present ongoing challenges for researchers in this area (see Buchmann, 2002; Brese, & Mirazchiyski, 2013; Caro, & Cortés, 2012).

As in the previous survey, the student questionnaire for ICCS 2016 includes three different types of measures:

- Data on *parental occupation* are collected through open-ended student reports on mother's and father's jobs and coded according to the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-2008) framework (International Labour Organisation, 2007). Subsequently, the codes will be scored using the international socioeconomic index (SEI) of occupational status, in order to obtain measures of socioeconomic status (Ganzeboom, de Graaf, & Treiman, 1992).
- Data on *parental education* are collected through closed questions in which educational levels are defined by the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED-2011) (UNESCO, 2012b) and then adapted to the national context.
- Data on *home literacy environment* are collected through a question about the number of books at home.

Given the increasing importance of ICT for civic engagement, the ICCS 2016 student questionnaire also includes questions about the *availability of electronic devices and household access to the internet*. Data derived from these questions will also provide additional indicators of socioeconomic background (see Fraillon et al., 2014).

Students' cultural/ethnic background: International studies confirm differences in achievement for reading and mathematics depending on language and immigrant status (see, for example, Elley, 1992; Mullis et al., 2000; Stanat, & Christensen, 2006). Students from immigrant families, especially among those who have arrived recently, tend to lack proficiency in the language of instruction and to be unfamiliar with the cultural norms of the dominant culture. Furthermore, ethnic minorities often have a lower SES, which correlates highly with learning and engagement; there is also evidence that immigrant status, ethnic background and language have effects on different students' learning outcomes even after controlling for other background variables (see for example, Fuligni, 1997; Kao, 2001; Lehmann, 1996; Stanat, & Christensen, 2006).

Results from ICCS 2009 showed that immigrant background and language use were both associated with civic-related learning outcomes, in particular in countries with larger proportions of immigration (see Schulz et al., 2010b). As in the previous survey, the ICCS 2016 student questionnaire includes the questions regarding the following cultural and ethnic background characteristics in its student questionnaire:

- *Country of birth (mother, father, and student):* This information was used to distinguish "native," "first-generation" (parents born abroad, but student born in country), and "immigrant" (student and parents born abroad) students.
- *Language of use at home* (language of assessment versus other languages).
- *Student self-reports on ethnicity* (optional for countries).

Students' parental interest: There is evidence that young people whose parents engage with them in discussions about politics and civic issues tend to have higher levels of civic knowledge and engagement (see, for example, Lauglo and Øia, 2006). The ICCS 2009 survey asked students to assess the extent of their parents interest in political and social issues, and results showed positive associations with some students' learning outcomes, in particular those related to expected political engagement as adults (Schulz et al., 2010b; Schulz, Ainley, & Fraillon, 2015). ICCS 2016 includes the same question, complemented by an item measuring the students' own interest in political and social issues.

Students' reports of family composition: Family structure represents an important factor of socialization that may affect learning outcomes. For example, research in the United States has shown that students from single-parent families perform less well than those from two-parent households, a finding which has been associated with economic stress, and lack of human or social capital in the household (McLanahan, & Sandefur, 1994; Seltzer, 1994). However, the effects of single-parent upbringing on learning outcomes have been generally considered as relatively small (for a review, see Ginther, & Pollak, 2004; Marjoribanks, 1997). Using a question that was optional for countries, ICCS 2009 measured family structure by asking students about the composition of their respective household, that is, parents, guardians, siblings, relatives, and/or other persons. The same question is included as an international option in the ICCS 2016 student questionnaire.

Students' discussion of political and social issues with parents and peers: Analysis of CIVED data showed that frequency of political discussions is a positive predictor of both feelings of efficacy and expected participation (see, for example, Richardson, 2003). Similar results were found in a comparative study of secondary students in 15 countries that participated in CIVED (Schulz, 2005), and ICCS 2009 data suggested associations between the frequency of participation in discussions about political and social issues and civic knowledge, as well as civic interest (Schulz et al., 2010b). The ICCS 2016 student questionnaire measures students' discussions of political and social issues with parents and peers using the same items as in the previous survey cycle.

Students' use of media for information on political and social issues: One popular explanation for the waning of civil society in the United States is the negative effect of television viewing (Putnam, 2000), which leads to decreasing interest, sense of efficacy, trust, and participation (see also Gerbner, 1980; Robinson, 1976). However, research also shows that media use (in particular for information) is usually positively related to political participation. For example, Norris (2000) concluded from an extensive literature review and findings from a large-scale study that there was no conclusive evidence for

a negative relationship between media use and political participation. CIVED showed that media information obtained from television news reports was a positive predictor for civic knowledge and expected participation in elections (Torney-Purta et al., 2001). ICCS 2009 also showed that students' civic knowledge was positively associated with viewing television news, and reading newspapers, and getting information from the internet (Schulz et al., 2010b). As in the previous survey cycle, the student questionnaire for ICCS 2016 includes a number of items measuring the frequency of students' use of media to obtain information about political and social issues.

Students' participation in religious services: Researchers have suggested that religious affiliation may help to foster political and social engagement (see Guo, Webb, Abzug, & Peck, 2013; Perks, & Haan, 2011; Verba et al., 1995), because religious organizations provide networks focused on political recruitment and motivation. However, there is also evidence for negative effects of religious affiliation on democratic citizenship, as reflected in lower levels of political knowledge and feelings of efficacy among strongly religious people (Scheufele, Nisbet, & Brossard, 2003). In the case of young people, religious affiliation and participation can be seen as part of the home environment that may influence the process of civic-related learning. As part of its international option about religion, ICCS 2016 asks students about the frequency of their attendance of religious services using the same question as in the previous survey cycle.

3.5 Student characteristics

Individual students' development of understandings, attitudes, and dispositions can be influenced by a number of characteristics, some of which link to family background. Antecedents at this level, collected through the student questionnaire, include the student characteristics of age, gender, and expected educational qualifications.

Students' age: Research has found that, during adolescence, civic knowledge and (at least some forms of) engagement increase with age (Amadeo et al., 2002; Hess, & Torney, 1967). However, there is also evidence that feelings of trust in the responsiveness of institutions and willingness to engage in conventional forms of active political participation decrease toward the end of secondary school (Schulz, 2005). ICCS 2009 confirmed earlier cross-sectional research based on grade sample data, which showed age to be negatively correlated with students' civic knowledge, in particular in countries with higher rates of grade repetition, because the students in the class who are older are typically those who have repeated a grade because of previous low achievement (Schulz et al., 2010b). As in the previous survey cycle, the student questionnaire asks students about their month and year of birth.

Students' sex (male, female): The first IEA Civic Education Study in 1971 found considerable gender differences regarding cognitive achievement, with males tending to have the higher civic knowledge scores (Torney et al., 1975). The IEA's 1999 CIVED survey, however, presented a different picture: whereas in some countries males showed (slightly and not significantly) higher average scores, in other countries females were performing better (although only one country reported the difference as significant). Interestingly, greater gender differences in favor of males were found in the follow-up study of upper secondary students (Amadeo et al., 2002). ICCS 2009 showed a gender gap in favor of female students (Schulz et al., 2010b), a change from CIVED 1999 that might also be explained by the broadening of the underlying assessment framework with its emphasis on aspects of reasoning.

CIVED also showed that gender differences were usually larger with regard to indicators of civic engagement: in most countries, males tended to have higher levels of political interest and expected participation. Gender differences were also important with regard to attitudes toward immigrants' and women's rights (Amadeo et al., 2002; Torney-Purta et al., 2001). ICCS 2009 confirmed these findings and showed gender differences for a wide range of indicators of civic attitudes and indicators of engagement (Fraillon et al., 2014; Kerr et al., 2010; Schulz et al., 2010b, ; Schulz, Ainley, Friedman, & Lietz, 2011). As in the previous survey cycle, the ICCS 2016 student questionnaire will ask about the students' sex (male, female).

Students' expected educational attainment: In the first two IEA studies on civic education, expected years of future education were important predictors of civic knowledge (Amadeo et al., 2002; Torney et al., 2001). This variable reflects individual aspirations. However, responses can also be influenced by parent or peer expectations and/or, in some education systems, by limitations brought about by students studying in programs that do not give access to university studies. ICCS 2009 data used a similar question that asked students to indicate their expected level of education. Results from this survey confirmed that this variable is positively associated with civic knowledge (Schulz et al., 2010b, pp. 225–232). As in the previous survey cycle, the ICCS 2016 student questionnaire asks about students' expected educational attainment.